

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image reproducing apparatus comprising:
an image forming part that carries out an image forming and reproducing process;
a data storage that stores a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with the image forming and reproducing process, each problem being stored in association with a problem ID code and addressee information and ~~problem ID code~~ selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

an acquiring unit that acquires problem information when one of the problems occurs in connection with the image forming and reproducing process;

an addressee determination unit that selects an addressee corresponding to said one of the problems with reference to the data storage;

a communication unit that reports occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee;

a web page creating means that creates a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in an image reporting and reproducing process; and

an e-mail creating means that creates an e-mail to report the occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee and inserts the problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.

Claim 2 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the forming and reproducing process includes at least one of a printing process for recording and outputting an image and a reading process for optically reading an original, and the

image forming part includes at least one of a printing section that records and outputs the image, and a reading section that optically reads the original.

Claim 3 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a printing process management unit that monitors and detects printing problems occurring in connection with the printing process, and a reading process management unit that monitors and detects reading problems occurring in connection with the reading process, wherein the acquiring unit acquires said one of the problems from one of the printing process management unit and the reading process management unit.

Claim 4 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a use information retaining unit that retains use information about the image reproducing apparatus, wherein the communication unit reports the occurrence of said one of the problems, together with the use information, to the selected addressee.

Claim 5 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the use information contains location information representing the location of the image reproducing apparatus.

Claim 6 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the use information contains ID information for identifying the image reproducing apparatus.

Claim 7 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the data storage stores one or more addressees as the addressee information, in association with said one of the problems.

Claim 8 (Original): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the data storage stores at least one of a user of the image reproducing apparatus, a system administrator who conducts system administration for the image reproducing apparatus, and a maintenance person of the service center, in association with said one of the problems.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the data storage stores an e-mail address as the addressee information, in association with said one of the problems.

Claims 10-12 (Cancelled).

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method for monitoring and reporting problem occurring in connection with an image forming and reproducing process, the method comprising the steps of:

storing a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with the image forming and reproducing process in advance, each of the problems being stored in association with a problem ID code and addressee information and problem ID code selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

detecting one of the problems having occurred in connection with the image forming and reproducing process;

determining an addressee to which the occurrence of the detected problem is to be reported, from the addressee information stored in association with the detected problem;

reporting the detected problem to the determined addressee;

a web page creating means that creates a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in an image reporting and reproducing process; and

creating an e-mail to report the detected problem to the determined addressee, including inserting the problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A problem monitoring apparatus connected to an image reproducing apparatus, comprising:

a data storage that stores a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with an image forming and reproducing process carried out in the image reproducing apparatus, each of the problems being stored in association with a problem ID code and addressee information and problem ID code selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

an acquiring unit that receives and acquires problem information from the image reproducing apparatus when one of the problems occurs in the image reproducing apparatus;

an addressee determination unit that selects an addressee corresponding to said one of the problems with reference to the data storage;

a communication unit that reports occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee;

a web page creating means that creates a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in an image reporting and reproducing process; and

e-mail creating means that creates an e-mail to report the occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee and inserts the problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An image reproducing apparatus comprising:
an image forming part that carries out an image forming and reproducing process;
a data storage that stores a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with the image forming and reproducing process, each problem being stored in association with addressee information selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

an acquiring unit that acquires problem information when one of the problems occurs in connection with the image forming and reproducing process;

an addressee determination unit that selects an addressee corresponding to said one of the problems with reference to the data storage;

a communication unit that reports occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee;

web page creating means that creates a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in the image reporting and reproducing process; and

an e-mail creating means that creates an e-mail to report the occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee and inserts ~~the~~ a problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the forming and reproducing process includes at least one of a printing process for recording and outputting an image and a reading process for optically reading an original, and the image forming part includes at least one of a printing section that records and outputs the image, and a reading section that optically reads the original.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising a printing process management unit that monitors and detects printing problems occurring in connection with the printing process, and a reading process management unit that monitors and detects reading problems occurring in connection with the reading process, wherein the acquiring unit acquires said one of the problems from one of the printing process management unit and the reading process management unit.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising a use information retaining unit that retains use information about the image reproducing apparatus, wherein the communication unit reports the occurrence of said one of the problems, together with the use information, to the selected addressee.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the use information contains location information representing the location of the image reproducing apparatus.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the use information contains ID information for identifying the image reproducing apparatus.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the data storage stores one or more addressees as the addressee information, in association with said one of the problems.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the data storage stores at least one of a user of the image reproducing apparatus, a system administrator who conducts system administration for the image reproducing apparatus, and a maintenance person of the service center, in association with said one of the problems.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The image reproducing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the data storage stores an e-mail address as the addressee information, in association with said one of the problems.

Claims 24-26 (Cancelled).

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): A method for monitoring and reporting problem occurring in connection with an image forming and reproducing process, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with the image forming and reproducing process in advance, each of the problems being stored in association with addressee information selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

detecting one of the problems having occurred in connection with the image forming and reproducing process;

determining an addressee to which the occurrence of the detected problem is to be reported, from the addressee information stored in association with the detected problem;

reporting the detected problem to the determined addressee;

creating a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in the detecting; and

creating an e-mail to report the occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee and inserts ~~the~~ a problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): A problem monitoring apparatus connected to an image reproducing apparatus, comprising:

a data storage that stores a plurality of possible problems occurring in connection with an image forming and reproducing process carried out in the image reproducing apparatus, each of the problems being stored in association with addressee information selected based on the severity of the problem and the proximity of the addressee to the image reproducing apparatus;

an acquiring unit that receives and acquires problem information from the image reproducing apparatus when one of the problems occurs in the image reproducing apparatus;

an addressee determination unit that selects an addressee corresponding to said one of the problems with reference to the data storage;

a communication unit that reports occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee; and

web page creating means that creates a Web page containing detailed information about the problems detected in the image reporting and reproducing process; and

creating an e-mail to report the occurrence of said one of the problems to the selected addressee and inserts ~~the~~ a problem ID code and a URL of the Web page in ~~the~~ a subject field of the e-mail.